

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 189061

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ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 /081 R

DRAFTED BY AF/C:DMARK:LA

APPROVED BY AF/C:EMARKS

IO/UNP:STERMER(INFO)

EA/K:PRMAYHE' (INFO)

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R 301456Z JUL 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
INFO AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR,SK, BY,RW

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH KOREAN DIPLOMAT ON UNGA PROBLEM

1. WHILE IN DEPARTMENT ON CONSULTATION FROM BUJUMBURA, AMBASSADOR MARK HAD CONVERSATION JULY 28 WITH KOREAN EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY MIN HYUNG-KI ON LACK OF SERIOUS EFFORT IN PAST BY SEOUL TO COURT BURUNDI. MARK NOTED THAT NORTH KOREANS HAD INVESTED TIME AND MODEST SUMS OF MONEY IN BURUNDI FOR PAST FIVE YEARS, AND THAT, WITH EXCHANGE OF A NUMBER OF OFFICIAL VISITS, AND WITH NORTH KOREAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO BURUNDI, PYONGYANG HAD GOTTEN SOLID BURUNDI SUPPORT FOR ITS INTERNATIONAL POSITION. MEANWHILE, SOUTH KOREA HAD MADE NO EFFORT TO COUNTERACT THIS TREND AND, INDEED, IN 1975, HAD ABANDONED

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PAGE 02 STATE 189061

ITS PRESENCE IN KIGALI, WHEN THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES HAD

QUIT THE COUNTRY WITHOUT ADVANCE NOTICE AFTER THE NORTH KOREANS HAD BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN RWANDA.

2. MARK RECOUNTED TWO CONVERSATIONS ON KOREA WITHIN PAST YEAR WITH PRESIDENT MICOMBERO IN WHICH LATTER HAD NOTED THAT HE HAD NEVER SEEN A SOUTH KOREAN BUT THAT, IN SPITE OF BURUNDI ALIGNMENT WITH NORTH KOREA, HE WOULD BE GLAD TO RECIEVE ANY EMISSARY OF THE SOUTH FOR A TALK. MARK SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS TIME FOR SEOUL TO TEST MICOMBERO'S PROFESSED OPEN-MINDEDNESS. PERHAPS, A SENIOR FRENCH-SPEAKING SOUTH KOREAN DIPLOMAT, WHO WOULD PROBABLY BE VISITING KINSHASA SOON, COULD MAKE CALLS IN BUJUMBURA AND KIGALI. HE WOULD HAVE TO BE ABLE NOT ONLY TO PRESENT HIS CASE PERSUASIVELY AND MAKE SOUTH KOREA'S ACHIEVEMENTS KNOWN, BUT ALSO TO HINT THAT GREATER BURUNDIAN NEUTRALITY MIGHT LEAD TO A MATERIAL PAYOFF IN FORM OF SOME BILATERAL ASSISTANCE. AMERICAN EMBASSY IN BUJUMBURA WOULD BE GLAD TO TRY TO SET UP MEETING OF VISITOR WITH MICOMBERO AND OTHER TOP BURUNDI OFFICIALS. OF COURSE, THERE WAS A CHANCE THAT MICOMBERO WOULD BACK OUT OF HIS EARLIER PROMISE TO RECEIVE A SOUTH KOREAN, BUT NOTHING RISKED, NOTHING GAINED.

3. MIN SAID THAT SOUTH KOREA HAD HAD VARIOUS IN-CONCLUSIVE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN 1963 AND 1966 WITH BURUNDI OFFICIALS DURING PERIOD OF ROYAL RULE, BUT NONE WITH REPUBLICAN REGIME WHICH HAD TAKEN OVER LATE IN 1966. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD URGE HIS CHIEF HERE TO SEND STRONG RECOMMENDATION TO SEOUL TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR NECESSARY STEPS IN BURUNDI AND RWANDA. HE WAS REMINDED THAT, IN VIEW OF SOMEWHAT GREATER ACTIVITY IN FRAMEWORK OF TRIPARTITE RWANDA-BURUNDI-ZAIRE MECHANISM, ZAIRE OFFICIALS MIGHT BE ABLE (IF WILLING) TO PROD BURUNDI AND RWANDA ON KOREAN QUESTION. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LOBBYING, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JUL 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE189061
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DMARK:LA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760295-1105
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976073/aaaaacmq.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2004 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH KOREAN DIPLOMAT ON UNGA PROBLEM
TAGS: PFOR, SK, BY, RW, (MIN HYUNG-KI)
To: BUJUMBURA SEÔUL
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006